

INTELL. LIBRARY

E

HALSTEAD URBAN DISTRICT

IN THE ADMINISTRATIVE

COUNTY OF ESSEX.



---

---

# ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

**Medical Officer of Health,**

**J. S. RANSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.**

For the year 1925.

(Including a survey of the years 1921-2-3-4 & 5.)

---

---

HALSTEAD,  
PRINTED BY VICTOR LING, CHIPPING HILL,  
1926.



Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2017 with funding from  
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29407382>

To the Chairman and Members of the  
HALSTEAD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL



MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in presenting the Annual Report on the Health and Vital Statistics relating to your district for the year 1925.

Following on the lines of instruction laid out in the Ministry of Health Circular No. 648 this report includes a survey of the year 1921 to 1925.

The Health of the district during this period has been good, the only outstanding outbreak being the epidemic of para-typhoid fever in 1924.

During 1922 the new sewage works were constructed.

Throughout the period under review there has been houses under the course of erection both by the Council and by private enterprise. The benefit of these new houses is already felt.

It is to be hoped that ere long the housing problem may be so relieved that steps may be taken for the closure of some of the more unsatisfactory houses in the district.

Again I wish to thank the Members of the Council, and there Staff for the help which they invariably afford me in carrying out my duties.

I have the honour to be

your obedient servant,

J. S. RANSON.

The Great Lodge,

Castle Hedingham.

May 24th, 1926.



# 1. Natural and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area (acres)	...	...	...	647
Population (Census 1921)	...	...	...	5,923
„ (Estimated 1925)	...	...	...	5,920
Number of inhabited houses (1921)	...	...	...	1,594
Number of families or separate occupiers	...	...	...	1,637
Rateable value	...	...	£20,356	5 0

Sum represented by a penny rate

Amount of Poor Law relief:—

Out relief	...	£960
Inmaintenance	...	£1,075

TABLE I.

	MALE.	FEMALE.
Total Births	43	44
Legitimate	41	43
Illegitimate	2	1
Deaths of Infants under 1 year	3	3
Legitimate	3	3
Illegitimate	0	0

Birth Rate	...	...	14.7 (per 1000 population)
Death Rate	...	...	14.18( „ „ „ )
Birth Rate ( England & Wales )	18.3	( „ „ „ )	
Death Rate ( „ „ )	12.2	( „ „ „ )	

TABLE II.

Cause of Death.				Males.	Females.
1.	Enteric Fever	...	...		1
2.	Small-pox	...	...		
3.	Measles	...	...		
4.	Scarlet Fever	...	...		
5.	Whooping Cough	...	...		
6.	Diphtheria	...	...		
7.	Influenza	...	...	1	
8.	Encephalitis Lethargica	...	...		
9.	Meningoccal Meningitis	...	...		1
10.	Tuberculosis of respiratory system	...	...	2	2
11.	Other tuberculosis diseases	...	...		1
12.	Cancer, malignant disease	...	...	3	10
13.	Rheumatic Fever	...	...		
14.	Diabetes	...	...		
15.	Cerebral Hæmorrhage, &c.	...	...	5	4
16.	Heart Disease	...	...	5	8
17.	Arterio-sclerosis	...	...	3	2
18.	Bronchitis	...	...	1	3
19.	Pneumonia (all forms)	...	...	2	
20.	Other Respiratory Diseases	...	...		
21.	Ulcer of Stomach or Duodenum	...	...	1	
22.	Diarrhœa, &c. (under 2 years)	...	...		
23.	Appendicitis and Typhlitis	...	...		
24.	Cirrhosis of Liver	...	...	1	
25.	Acute and chronic Nephritis	...	...	2	
26.	Puerperal Sepsis	...	...		
27.	Other accidents of pregnancy & parturition				1
28.	Congenital Debility & Malformation				
	Premature Birth	...	...	2	2
29.	Suicide	...	...	2	1
30.	Other deaths from violence	...	...	1	
31.	Other defined causes of death	...	...	14	5
32.	Causes ill-defined or unknown	...	...		
Total				45	41

## PHYSICAL FEATURES AND GENERAL CHARACTER OF AREA.

---

The town consists roughly of two parts. That to the North East is situated on the slope of a hill facing South West, is of mixed clay and gravel soil with a substructure of chalk. The second part lies to the South West and is separated from the first by the River Colne. This also consists of clay and gravel with a substructure of chalk. Here the houses mostly lie in the river valley, a small proportion only being on the hill forming the edge of the valley.

The district is defined by a boundary, consisting of a circle having a radius of 1000 yards from the bridge over the River Colne.

### SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The chief occupations of the inhabitants are at the Silk-weaving Factory of Messrs. Courtaulds Limited where approximately 880 hands are employed and at the Tortoise Foundry of Messrs. Portway & Son where 200 hands are employed. There is no evidence that either of these occupations have the slightest ill effect on the health of the employees. The Housing Conditions are fair. The Council continues to build houses under their housing scheme.

The only cause of sickness specially interesting in the area during the period under review was the outbreak of para-typhoid during the summer of 1924. The outbreak consisted of 25 cases, the cause of origin of which was not ascertained.

## 2.—General Provision of Health Services in the Area.

*Hospitals provided or subsidized by the Local Authority or by the County Council.*

- (i) The Infectious Disease Hospital situated in Halstead Urban District is managed by a Joint Hospital Committee for the reception of infectious cases occurring in the Halstead Urban and Rural Districts. Cases from Belchamp Rural District are also admitted under a special agreement.

Accommodation :— { 22 beds in 6 blocks.  
There is also accommodation for  
4 cases in huts.

- (ii) The Small Pox Hospital situated at Sible Hedingham is managed by a Joint Hospital Committee for the reception of cases occurring in the following districts :—

Braintree Joint Hospital District,  
Saffron Walden Joint Hospital District,  
Belchamp Rural District,  
Dunmow Rural District,  
Halstead Rural District,  
Halstead Urban District.

The Hospital is at present let to the Essex County Council and is used as a Children's Sanatorium. There is an agreement whereby in the event of an outbreak of small pox it can be cleared in 24 hours.

---

There is no Institutional Provision for unmarried mothers, illegitimate infants and homeless children in the district.



### *Ambulance facilities.*

(a) for infectious cases :—

A horse ambulance is kept for infectious cases at the Infectious Diseases Hospital and a motor ambulance, the property of the Braintree Cottage Hospital, is also available by a special arrangement.

(b) for non-infectious and accident cases :—

A hand ambulance belonging to Messrs. Adams & Sons is kept at the Brewery and is always available for use.

The motor ambulance from Braintree is also available.

## CLINICS AND TREATMENT CENTRES.

**A Maternity and Child Welfare Centre** is held at the Technical School on the second and fourth Thursdays of each month. The Medical Officer of Health attends for consultation purposes only. This Centre is provided under the scheme of the Essex County Council.

The accommodation is good and ample.

**A School Clinic** is held at the Halstead Cottage Hospital each Wednesday during the school terms.

This Clinic is provided under the scheme of the Essex County Council. The accommodation is very good and ample.

**A Tuberculosis Dispensary** is held at the Halstead Cottage Hospital on the third and fourth Wednesdays of each month. This Dispensary is also provided under the scheme of the Essex County Council.

The accommodation is the same as that used for the School Clinic and is therefore very good.

### **Treatment Centres for Venereal Diseases.**

Patients can under an Essex County Scheme obtain treatment at Colchester and Ipswich.



## Public Health Staff.

W. A. NICHOLSON, M.I.M.C.E.,

Sanitary Inspector also Surveyor.

J. S. RANSON, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H.,

Medical Officer of Health, part time

also Assistant County M.O.H.

Formerly Assistant School Medical Officer,

Yorkshire (N.R.) County Council,

& Assistant Medical Officer of Health to the  
County Borough of Ipswich.

---

## Professional Nursing in the Home.

### (a) GENERAL.

There are two district nurses in the district managed by the Halstead Nursing Association which is subsidized by the Essex County Council.

### (b) FOR INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

There are no special arrangements.

## Midwives.

The two district nurses of the Halstead Nursing Association are both certified midwives and act as such, they are as mentioned above subsidized by the County Council.

There is one other registered midwife residing in the district.

## Chemical Work.

All Chemical work and analyses are undertaken by Drs. THRESH AND BEALE at the Counties Public Health Laboratories, 91, Queen Victoria Street, London, E.C. 4., by arrangement with the Essex County Council.

## LEGISLATION IN FORCE.

Baths and Washhouses Act. adopted in 1886.

Infectious Disease Prevention Act adopted in 1890.

Part III. Public Health Acts Amendment act. 1890 adopted 1891.

Part II. III. IV. (Sections 52 to 67) and VI.

The Public Health Acts Amendment Act 1907.

Adopted in 1914.

Byelaws dealing with Slaughter Houses adopted in 1896. Cleansing of Footways and Pavements 1896. Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops adopted 1907. New Streets and Buildings adopted in 1925. These byelaws repealed others made in 1896.

There are no local Sanitary Acts.

### Water Supply.

Water is derived from a deep well situated in the Urban Area near the banks of the River Colne.

The well is 8ft. 6in. diameter for a depth of 49 feet and is lined with iron cylinders.

From the bottom of the well there is a 9in. diameter borehole to a further depth of 265 feet making a total depth of well and borehole of 314 feet.

The borehole is lined with iron tubes to a depth of 200 ft. where it enters the chalk.

There is an ample supply of water. The rest water level is about 25 feet below the surface and fluctuates 20 feet during pumping.

The water is raised by two sets of treble barrel pumps each set having a capacity of 16,000 gallons per hour, to two iron tanks situated near Head Street.

The whole of the population is supplied with water from the Works, the average daily quantity supplied being 130,000 gallons.

## Rivers and Streams.

The River Colne runs through the district, there is no presence of any pollution.

## Drainage and Sewage.

SEWAGE. Practically the whole of the District is sewered only a very few houses not being connected with the main drainage system. Although some of the sewers are of old construction they are kept in a sanitary condition by frequent flushing.

SEWAGE DISPOSAL. The Sewage Disposal Works are situated on the bank of the River Colne, in the Parish of Colne Engaine about 1 mile below the Urban District.

The works are of recent construction having been completed in January 1923 at a cost of nearly £15,000 and comprise sand pits, screening chambers, detritus tanks, storm overflow, where the sewage in excess of three times the dry weather flow discharges into storm water tanks, deep vertical hydrolitic tank, dosing chamber, three percolating filters with revolving sprinklers and humas tank. The effluent from the humas tank passes along an open channel and discharges into the River Colne. The sludge from all parts of the works drains into a deep sludge well from which it is pumped into drying beds. After being dried the sludge is sold to farmers for agricultural use.

The works are designed to treat 190,000 gallons per day, some 25,000 gallons in excess of the present flow.

CLOSET ACCOMMODATION. There are only 23 earth closets in the district all the others being water closets furnished with flushing apparatus. The earth closet pails are emptied by the Council's employees.

SCAVENGING. The removal of house refuse is carried out weekly by the Council's employees. One covered dust cart is used and one open one. The refuse is carted outside the Urban area and is utilised to fill up the excavations in a pit from which gravel and stone have been removed. Movable dustbins (galvanised iron bins) have during recent years been substituted for fixed receptables at practically every house in the district.

The few earth closets in the district are emptied by the Council's workmen twice weekly, the soil being removed to agricultural land outside the town.

### Sanitary Inspection of the Area.

No. of Inspections and Re-inspections	...	977
Nuisances detected	... ..	387
Water closets repaired	... ..	129
Dustbins renewed	... ..	129
Drains repaired	... ..	26
House drains relaid	... ..	9
Informal Notices served	... ..	288
Statutory Notices served	... ..	105
Notices complied with	... ..	271
Legal Proceedings	... ..	Nil
Seizures of unsound food	... ..	Nil

SMOKE ABATEMENT. In one case action was taken with a view to the abatement of nuisance from smoke.

DARIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS. A register of Cowkeepers and retail purveyors is kept. There are 3 cowkeepers and 2 purveyors on the list. The premises are frequently inspected.

Most of the milk consumed in the district is brought in from the Rural area.

BAKEHOUSES. There are 10 Bakehouses in the District, all inspected at varying intervals.

DISINFECTION. Thirty Premises have been disinfected with Formic Aldehyde Vapour.



## Schools.

There are three Public Elementary Schools in the District, two of which have Infants Departments.

During the year 1924-25 one of these Schools together with its Infants Department was closed for seven days, on account of illness of staff due to Influenza.

With this exception no school was closed during the year.

## HOUSING.

### I. General Housing Conditions in the Area.

1. The General Housing conditions are fair ; there are in the area a number of old houses that barely come up to the modern standard ; in respect of some of these Closing Orders will shortly be made.

The question of the housing in the area is at present under investigation and will during the year be the subject of a special report.

- II. (a) The extent of shortage of Houses is approximately 100.
- (b) The Council under their Housing Scheme are doing their utmost to make good this shortage.
- III. There have been no important changes of population during the period. The increase of the estimated population for the five years is calculated as only 4 persons. In that for the number of separate families as 37.

### II. Overcrowding.

- (i) EXTENT AND SLIGHT. Two cases only have been brought to the notice of the Sanitary Authority ; the Sanitary Authority are endeavouring to obtain suitable houses for these two families.

### III.

- (i) The General Standard of housing in the area is average only. There are approximately 50 houses in the town that should be closed as soon as the housing problem affords alternative accommodation.

There are no byelaws regarding houses let in lodgings and dwellers in tents and vans.

HOUSING STATISTICS. Number of Houses erected during the year.

- (a) Total including number given separately under (b) 22 and 16 under construction.
- (b) With state assistance under the Housing Acts.
- (1) By the Local Authority : 8 and 8 under construction.
- (2) By other bodies or persons : 22 and 4 under construction.

#### Unfit Dwelling Houses.

1. (1) INSPECTIONS. Total number of dwelling Houses inspected for Housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts) ... 337
- (2) Number of dwelling Houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations 1910 or the Housing Consolidated Regulations 1925. 337
- (3) Number of dwelling Houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to Health as to be unfit for human Habitation. ... Nil
- (4) Number of dwelling Houses (exclusive of those referred to under the proceeding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human Habitation. ... 337
2. Remedy of Defects without service of formal notices. Number of defective dwelling Houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their Officers. ... 199

### 3. ACTION UNDER STATORY POWERS.

#### (a) *Proceedings under Section 3 of the Housing Acts 1925.*

1.	Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs.				
	Notices Served	...	...	...	118
2.	Number of dwelling Houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—				
	(a) By owner	...	...	...	119
	(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	...	...	...	2
3.	Number of dwelling Houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declaration by Owners of intention to close.	...	...	...	Nil
(B)	Proceedings under Public Health Acts.			...	Nil
(C)	Proceedings under Sections II. 14 and 15 of the Housing Acts 1925.		...	...	Nil

<b>Slaughter Houses.</b>	1920.	Jan. 1925.	Dec. 1925.
Registered			
Licensed	6	7	7

### INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

#### (a) **Milk Supply.**

Most of the Milk is produced outside and brought into the area. The supply is adequate and pure and wholesome in character.

There has been no action taken regarding tuberculous milk or tuberculous cattle.

There has been no licence granted for the sale of classified milk which has been refused or revoked.

It has not been considered necessary to submit samples of milk for bacteriological examination.

(b) **Meat.**

Under the Public Health (Meat) Regulations 1924 Notices of Slaughtering are sent to the Sanitary Inspector who wherever possible is present at the time of slaughter. The Council has not made arrangements for the marking of meat. No carcase has been condemned since the coming into force of these regulations. The condition of the stalls, shops, stores and vehicles are also under the supervision of the Sanitary Inspector and are satisfactory.

There are no public slaughter houses in the district.

**SLAUGHTER HOUSES.**

	In 1920.	In Jan. 1925.	In Dec. 1925.
Registered	0	0	0
Licensed	6	7	7
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
TOTAL	6	7	7

**PREVALENCE OF AND CONTROL OVER INFECTIOUS DISEASES.**

*Infectious Diseases Generally.*

With the exception of the outbreak of para-typhoid during June and July of 1924 there has been nothing interesting concerning the prevalence of notifiable infectious disease during the period since 1920.

This outbreak of para-typhoid consisted of 25 cases, notified between the 12th May and 29th June; 9 cases also occurred in the Halstead Rural District. The direct cause of the outbreak was not ascertained. There have been very few cases of diphtheria. A supply of antitoxin is kept at the Halstead Infectious Diseases Hospital and may be obtained therefrom by any practitioner in the district. There has been no delay in the administration of the antitoxin. There have been 2 cases of Encephalitis Lethargica one of which occurred



in Northamptonshire in 1925 and was removed to this district. This case died. The other occurred in 1921 and recovered. This case was the subject of a special report to the Ministry of Health.

No "return" cases of scarlet fever have been discovered. No cases of malaria, dysentery or trench fever have been notified.

Cases of pneumonia are notified, but the definition of Acute primary pneumonia seems not always to be strictly adhered to, a matter which it is difficult to dispute.

The examination of Pathological and Bacteriological specimens are carried out by Drs. Thresh and Beale at the Counties Laboratories by an arrangement with the Essex County Council.

---

Specimen.			Number examined.
Diphtheria	...	...	24
Sputa	...	...	45
Typhoid	...	...	6
Ringworm	...	...	7
Miscellaneous	...	...	1
			<hr/> 83 <hr/>

Cases of infectious disease are isolated at the Halstead Isolation Hospital.

It has not been found necessary to make use of either the Schick or Dick tests of any of the recently developed artificial methods of inoculation against scarlet fever and diphtheria.

There have been no primary vaccinations or revaccinations performed by the Medical Officer of Health.

Nothing noteworthy has occurred with regard to non notifiable acute infectious disease. This area is part of a Combined Area where the Medical Officer of Health is also Assistant County Medical Officer ; the School Health Service is therefore kept closely in touch with.

Deaths from influenza total seven only since 1920 ; there have therefore been no special investigations regarding this disease.

This disinfection of premises is carried out by the Sanitary Inspector by means of formic aldehyde vapour.

Clothes and beddings are disinfected by a steam disinfectant at the Infectious Disease Hospital.

### Notifiable Diseases (other than Tuberculosis) during the year 1925.

Disease.	Total Cases Notified.	Cases admitted to Hospital.	Total Deaths.
Smallpox ... ..	0	0	
Scarlet Fever ... ..	0	0	
Diphtheria ... ..	1	1	
Enteric Fever ... ..	1	1	
Pneumonia ... ..	11	0	
Polio-myelitis ... ..	1	0	
Erysipelas ... ..	1	0	
Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis ...	1	0	1

# Tuberculosis.

## New Cases and Mortality during 1925.

Age Periods.	New Cases.				Deaths.			
	Pulmonary.		Non Pulmonary		Pulmonary.		Non Pulmonary	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0.....								
1.....			1					
5.....			2	2				
10.....								
15.....								
20.....	1	2		2				
25.....	1					1		
35.....					1			
45.....								
55.....	1				1	1		
65 and upwards								1
TOTALS	3	2	3	4	2	2		1

## Public Health (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations 1925.

### Public Health Act, 1925. Section 62.

No action has been taken under these regulations and under this act during the year 1925.

There have been no cases notified of Puerperal fever and Ophthalmia Neonatorum during the year 1925.

The incidence of measles, whooping cough epidemic diarrhoea and polio-myelitis has been slight.







